INTERACTIVE SIMULATION

RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application is a continuation of a U.S. provisional utility patent application, Ser. No. 60/954,864, filed Aug. 9, 2007, with common inventors and a similar title. The provisional application contains a computer program listing appendix, submitted electronically via EFS-web, as an ASCII text file, the content of which is herein incorporated by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention generally relates to an interactive simulation (patent or IP (intellectual properties)) system and, more specifically, to an interactive computer-based implementation of a patent system where any number of users may take part in the system at a given time.

[0003] As can be seen, there is a need for an interactive patent system that may test the behavior of real-world patent systems by simulating such systems under different conditions. There also is a need for a multi-user interactive patent system that may be incorporated into, for example, an online virtual world. The IP or patent professionals, PTO officials, attorneys, law students, licensing professionals, licensing executives, investors (VCs), business development executives, teachers, psychologists, social scientists, high school, college, graduate school, or professional school (e.g., law, business, policy, or medicine) students, economists, industrial planners, government officials or decision makers, Congress, and game enthusiasts, among others, may use this program/invention for their businesses or requirements.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0004] Patent systems are often justified by assumptions that inventive activity will be spurred by the prospect of patent protection, leading to the accrual of greater societal benefits than would be possible under non-patent systems. One way to test this hypothesis is to experimentally simulate the behavior of inventors and licensees, in particular, and society, in general, under conditions approximating patent and non-patent systems. By measuring differences in a metric representing societal benefit, it is possible to make direct quantitative comparisons between such alternative systems. A multi-user interactive simulation system ("PatentSim™") may be used to test hypotheses (or obtain statistics and trend) of individual and societal benefits (and behavior) by varying incentives for such activities as invention, licensing, selling, infringement, and enforcement by creating a modified (e.g., simplified) model of the inventive process, and networking together multiple users so they can interact through this system.

[0005] PatentSim™ may use an abstract and cumulative model of potential innovations, a database of potential innovations, an interactive interface that allows users to invent these innovations, and a network over which users may interact with one another. Users can potentially cooperate or compete by recombining simpler inventions into more complex and powerful combination inventions. PatentSim™ may be used to test hypotheses regarding the benefits conferred on society, in general, and patent inventors, licensees, sellers, infringers, and enforcers, in particular, under patent and non-patent systems and other real or potential legal systems, for example, any IP system.

[0006] These and other features, aspects and advantages of the present invention will become better understood with reference to the following drawings, description and claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] FIG. **1** is an interactive patent system simulation according to the present invention (a simplified example/version of a screenshot);

[0008] FIG. **2** is an interactive patent system simulation according to the present invention;

[0009] FIG. **3** is an interactive patent system simulation according to the present invention;

[0010] FIG. **4** is an interactive patent system simulation according to the present invention;

[0011] FIG. **5** is an interactive patent system simulation according to the present invention;

[0012] FIG. **6** is an interactive patent system simulation according to the present invention;

[0013] FIG. **7** is an interactive patent system simulation according to the present invention; and

[0014] FIG. **8** is an interactive patent system simulation according to the present invention.

[0015] FIG. **9** is the overall system, as an example.

DETAILED EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION

[0016] The following description is not to be taken in a limiting sense, but is made merely for the purpose of illustrating the general principles of the invention (as examples and just different embodiments).

[0017] The term "interactive" when used to describe a patent system refers to a patent system in which a user of the system may make choices within the confines of the system to possibly change outcomes produced by the system. For example, an interactive patent system may have at least one user that can choose to patent an item, make an item, license a patent, sell a patent, enforce a patent and the like. Such an interactive patent system may be considered a "simulation" in that it may simulate a real-world patent system. The interactive patent system may be considered a "game" in that multiple users may access the same system and compete against each other to determine which user may have the best strategy in terms of choosing items to patent, sell, license, enforce, and the like. An interactive patent system according to the present invention may run automatically, replacing some or all of the human users with computational agents or other systems, thereby simulating, for example, in hours, what could take many years in a real-world patent system. Users of an interactive patent system according to the present invention may include a human user or users, an automated user or users (e.g., a computer or computers following a software algorithm or algorithms), or any mixture thereof.

[0018] The term "element" may be defined as an individual component that a user may make or patent, either individually or in combination with one or more other elements. Elements can be represented by any types of designators, such as letters, numbers, colors, shapes, symbols, sounds, patterns, and the like. Elements may be called components, tiles, blocks or the like, depending on the particular form of the element. For example, the string of letters ABCD could represent a unique invention comprised of two pieces of prior art, AB and CD, with a reason for combination, combined together.